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In the eighth month of the Tibetan calendar in 1952 the first Chinese troops arrived at Gadong, a Tibetan Buddhist monastery and the home of the recently ordained monk, Palden Gyatso. According to his memoirs, after barging into the monastery the Chinese put on plays and ran films chronicling Chairman Mao's Peoples' Liberation Army defeating the Nationalist led Guomindang and the Japanese. In addition, the Chinese also loaned money to the poor and gave governmental positions to the political elite. Over time, the theatrical shows soon evolved into political meetings with bombastic Chinese lecturers praising Mao and promising that the "motherland" would improve development and quality of life in Tibet.[1] To Palden, this perception of a "motherland" was a confusing notion. Mao's Communists were arguing that Tibet was now and had always been part of China, but Palden and many of his fellow Tibetans had always viewed Tibet as an independent nation free from Chinese hegemony. Looking back to his childhood, Palden remembered stories his uncle would relay to him about the creation of world, the tale of a union between a monkey and an ogress in Tibetan Buddhist mythology. The Chinese laughed at these histories calling them childish imaginings. And Palden realized that although these are just legends they are still, "powerful narratives, part of what it meant to be Tibetan." To Palden, the Chinese and the Tibetans shared separate histories and at times different senses of reality.[2]

Throughout the world, the twentieth century was tumultuous and Sino-Tibetan relations are no exception. Beginning in 1950 with the end of the Chinese Civil War and moving up through the Cultural Revolution and into the present, the relationship between Tibet and China continues to define the two nations. Tibet pushing for independence as China attempts to maintain authority. In the West, the relationship is viewed as evidence of China's discouraging view on human rights with Tibet painted as a *Lost Horizon* Shangri-la, a peaceful and mystical Himalayan utopia, shackled by the iron weight of the Communist Chinese. Certainly, there is some truth to the idea, but it ultimately lacks historical depth. For centuries, Tibet was not an isolated figure in trans-Asian history. Tibet

and China have a long history of contact dating back to the seventh century when the first Tibetan emperor, Songstan Gampo, took a Tang Chinese princess as a wife all while Tibet also had frequent contact with other players throughout Asia including India and Mongolia. These histories helped influence Tibet and define as Palden says, “what it meant to be Tibetan.” By the twentieth century, Tibet had also made connections with the West, particularly the British through India, and became aware of events around the world as China also pushed to shed its spheres of influence and regain the power it once held. New ideas from the West, such as nationalism, strictly measured state boundaries, bureaucracy, and centralized government made their way to the Far East and helped rock already shaky Sino-Tibetan relations. Soon Tibet was sucked into the turbulence of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. In order to understand, the modern Sino-Tibetan relationship, these factors: history and the rapidly changing twentieth century, must be taken into account.

In the early seventh century, the early stages of the Tibetan Empire began to form. A clan leader named Namri Songsten methodically defeated his rivals one by one and established control around Lhasa eventually sending two ambassadors to China in 608 and 609 thus marking the earliest official contact between the governments of Tibet and China.[3] Throughout the century, Tibet continued to grow under Namri Songsten's son, Songsten Gampo as he conquered small neighboring empires, such as the Zhangzung and the Azha. Soon, Tibet was sharing a border with Tang China. Songsten had no desire to conquer China because his empire could not stretch far enough to control it directly. Therefore, the Tibetan emperor, or tsenpo, decided to deal a decisive blow to China's military to illustrate the strength of the nomadic Tibetan forces and then retreat. The plan was successful and opened diplomatic doors between Lhasa and Chang'an. Songsten sent his best minister, Gar Tongsten, with coffers of treasure to the capital to push for a healthy relationship between Tibet and China with the motive of securing Tibet's borders without further violence. According to both Chinese and Tibetan sources, Gar was wildly successful and even returned to Tibet with a Chinese princess for Songsten to marry; the wedlock between the Tibetan emperor and the Chinese princess was now a symbol of Sino-Tibetan unity.[4]

According to Chinese historians, the Chinese princess went on to civilize the barbaric red-faced Tibetans transforming their obsession with fur to an affinity towards fine Chinese silks. However, the Tibetan historians tend to disagree. They argue that the Chinese princess' greatest contribution was the first statute of Buddha found in Tibet. In fact, the Chinese princess, as well as one of Songsten Gampo's other wives, a princess from Nepal, is held in high esteem in Tibet for introducing Buddhism.[5] Undoubtedly, this is a defining factor of Tibetan religious history, but it is also quite significant when discussing Sino-Tibetan relations. Following Songsten's death, Tibetan rule moved on to Gar Tongsten, but Sino-Tibetan relations faltered under the successive tsenpos. Tibet and China oscillated between periods of war and peace with Trisong Detsan even taking Chang'an for a short period in 763 following the An Lushan Rebellion in China. However, despite the shaky relations with China, Tibet continued to prosper and under Trisong Detsan Buddhism grew. At the onset, Buddhism was not popular in Tibet and was instead viewed as an attack on the native religion of Bon. However, according to Tibetan Buddhist historians Trisong Detsan saw the light. At the start of his career, Buddhism was banned in Tibet, monasteries, which had been established during Songsten's reign, were closed and the first Buddha statue in Tibet, Songsten's Chinese princesses' dowry, was buried.[6] But Trisong pushed through the ban and helped bring Buddhism to the whole of Tibet. In the Tibetan Buddhist history, Trisong is featured as a shining light and benevolent mass convertor, but in reality he had political reasons to support Buddhism.

Religious history is rarely confined to actual moments of enlightenment. In medieval Russia, conversion to Orthodox Christianity was a political maneuver designed to cement trade benefits with the Byzantines, the eighth century Caucus Khazars converted to Judaism in a brilliant plan to continue trade with the Byzantines and the Arabs without falling into either's sphere of influence, and Tibet is no different. Certainly, Buddhism holds a warm place in many Tibetans' hearts today, but that does not mean that politics did not persuade their original conversion. At the time, Tibet was centered between two large centers of Buddhist thought: India and China, as well as many other small centers, such as Nepal and Korea. Buddhist monasteries were hubs of trade and power and Tibet's ban of

Buddhism put the nation at a major disadvantage in international trade, especially considering the growing wealth of the Silk Routes, which Tibet was desperate to control. Conversion to Buddhism was a political and economic necessity. However, Tibetans still needed to decide between various lines of Buddhism. Since Trisong Detsan had declared war on China and invaded Chang'an converting to Chinese Buddhism was not a popular idea. Therefore, Trisong decided to adopt the fundamental principles of Indian Buddhism.[7] His decision established Tibet as a Buddhist nation while also keeping Tibet separate from Tang China's growing sphere of influence.

This newly formed Tibetan Buddhism, which would later commingle with Chinese Buddhism and native Tibetan religions, such as Bon, saddled Tibet firmly between China and India. Although Tibetans shared many similarities with the Chinese, they began to grow increasingly fond of India and revered it as a holy land, the birth place of Buddha.[8] Tibetan monks, such as Marpa Chokyi Lodro, made pilgrimages through Nepal or Kashmir in order to study in far off India and Tibetan interest helped fund India's tantric Buddhist monasteries as they became less popular in India itself.[9] Throughout the centuries, Tibetans shared stories of its wonder and many held strong into the twentieth century, as Palden Gyatso illustrates in his remembrance of his uncle's stories, “what a wonderful place India must be, so full of magical things.”[10] Although the process began before the adoption of Buddhism, Tibetan culture and even language became increasingly more transnational and unique. For example, although spoken Tibetan descends from the same ancestors as Chinese its written form became based on Indian Sanskrit as Buddhist monks worked tirelessly to convert Buddhist canonical texts to Tibetan. The mixture of cultures in Tibet, which also drew from native and Persian influence, fueled tension between Tibet and China, as well as India and China.

However, despite the flowering of culture by the mid-ninth century, the Tibetan Empire had collapsed due to overextension and civil war with some traditionalists blaming recently-introduced Buddhism.[11] However, despite some setbacks in certain areas, Tibetan Buddhists continued to grow stronger and monasteries formed the backbone of the Tibetan economic, educational, and political structure following the empire's collapse in much the same way that the Church supported

Western Europe following the fall of Rome. From the mid-ninth century to the mid-eleventh century, the Buddhists pushed to assimilate church and state, but Tibet remained marginal decentralized. At the same time, China was also undergoing hardship. The Tang Dynasty, which had begun to falter during the An Lushan Rebellion of the mid-eighth century, fell by the beginning of the tenth century and a period of chaotic change followed until the establishment of the Song dynasty. During this period, Tibet and China were still in contact, but only amongst small groups as centralized states had fallen. However, the two nations would soon come under one rule as the Mongols began their rapid expansion at the start of the thirteenth century.

In 1206, Genghis Khan and his Mongol army sprung from Mongolia and started to form the foundation for the largest contingent empire in history. By the mid-thirteenth century, Tibet capitulated to the Mongols fearing a full-scale onslaught. As a result, the Mongols treated the Tibetans hospitably and permitted them to operate outside the jurisdiction of any of the major khans. The Tibetans maintained their current government and laws, few select monasteries were pillaged, and the region carried a large degree of autonomy as long as they paid tribute. The Mongols even formed a patron-priest agreement with Tibetan lamas, offering military aid in exchange for spiritual advice, a practice which lasted for several years and grew to new heights following the Mongolian conversion to Tibetan Buddhism. On the other hand, the Mongol invasion of China was much more drawn out lasting over six decades. Beginning in 1207 and going until 1276, the Mongols made constant excursions slowly whittling away at Chinese territory until Kublai Khan finally completed the Chinese takeover by establishing the Yuan dynasty, the first instance of a foreign ruler taking control over the entirety of China. Unlike in Tibet, the Mongols did not allow China to operate autonomously, instead Beijing was Kublai Khan's seat of power, which he began to use to full effect upon becoming Great Khan following the death of his brother Mongke. After this change, Tibet did come under Yuan rule, but there is no evidence to suggest that this changed the way the area was governed, it simply meant that Tibet's tributes would now be sent to Kublai.

Interestingly, some Chinese historians argue that this moment marks the earliest example of

an incorporation of Tibet into China. While at this time Tibet and China were both subject to the same government, in reality, that does not mean that Tibet was incorporated into China. Both were parts of the larger Mongol Empire descended from Genghis Khan. Confusion may arise from the fact that these areas were governed differently. On one hand, the Mongols established a dynasty in China and attempted to make themselves appear like a new Chinese aristocracy in a sense molding themselves to the Chinese system in order to hold better control over their new subjects. On the other hand, Tibet was ruled with a light touch the Mongols simply extracted tribute in exchange for military protection and left the political structure unaltered. There is no known instance of the Mongols sending Chinese to rule over Tibet, the region continued to be ruled by Tibetans and maybe a few Mongols throughout the empire's reign. However, the Mongol empire's influence remains a watershed in Sino-Tibetan relations. It is not evidence of a Chinese authority over Tibet in the thirteenth century, but it is evidence of China and Tibet cohabiting the same broad governmental structure albeit with China as a strong central post of the Kublai's empire and Tibet as a colony of the Mongol metropole.

Following the collapse of the Mongol Empire, Sino-Tibetan relations fall into an unclear stage. Tibetans had wrestled independence from the Mongols decades before their collapse while the Chinese remained under Mongol rule. However, the Tibetans retained the political structure created by the Mongols and simply appointed their own politicians. As a result, some argue that Tibetan independence was hollow and that Tibetans had selected a new king, but in reality the Mongols continued to hold the highest seats of power. This debate continued following the collapse of the Mongol Empire and the onset of Ming control. On one hand, Chinese historians argue that Tibet never gained independence and was firmly under Ming rule. They believe that the Ming court giving titles to Tibetan leaders provides evidence of Chinese control. However, on the other hand, many historians outside of China contend that these titles were accepted, but not seen as binding agreements. According to them, Tibet was an independent region that later paid tribute to the Ming to avoid war. Although the exact relationship is confusing, it is clear that whether Tibet was either part

of the Ming Empire or completely independent, it did show an extensive degree of autonomy with Tibetans conducting international diplomacy with not only India and Nepal, but also the remnants of the Mongol Empire. By the tail end of the sixteenth century, any influence that the Ming had over Tibet was beginning to disappear as the Tibetan Buddhists sought to align themselves with the remaining Mongol contingents.

By this time, the Tibetan military had become weak in comparison to the rest of Asia and the Tibetans wanted to procure military aid from the weakened, but still influential Mongol powers. Simultaneously, the Mongols were attempting to stabilize the authority of their royalty. The answer to both sides' problems was a return to the patron-priest system, originally established between Kublai Khan and the Tibetan lamas, and Mongol conversion to Tibetan Buddhism. In 1578, the leader of the Gelugpa school of Tibetan Buddhism, Sonam Gyatso, made the long, arduous trek to the Mongol capital of Koko Khotan and met with their leader, Altan Khan. Sonam Gyatso claimed that he was a reincarnation of the Buddhist monk that had converted Kublai Khan while Altan was a reincarnation of Kublai and that their souls had finally crossed paths again to fuel the growth of Buddhism in Mongolia. Following the proclamation, Altan translated the name Sonam Gyatso into Mongolian and began to call him the Dalai Lama. Although he was the first monk to receive the title, it was retroactively given to the two previous monks in his reincarnation line, making him officially the third Dalai Lama. The repercussions of this event were multifold with Sino-Tibetan relations feeling a substantial blow. The Third Dalai Lama's speech sent a message to the international community that the Mongols and the Tibetans were now allies and brothers in Tibetan Buddhism. The Tibetans had again escaped the Chinese sphere of influence by allying themselves with a powerful neighbor.

Although Tibet had been fractured during the Ming dynasty in China, the Gelugpa school's alliance with the Mongols allowed the Fifth Dalai Lama to use Mongol military aid to unite Tibet under one religious and secular ruler thus unifying church and state. In addition, he fostered warm relations with China thus suggesting that Tibet was separate from Chinese control. In fact, according to many accounts the Dalai Lama was treated as an equal to the Chinese Emperor, Kangxi. Some

argue that when the Dalai Lama arrived, he went to bow to the Emperor and the Emperor humbly replied that there was no need and he was allowed to stay in the Yellow Palace, which was built specifically for him. Even though other historians disagree with these claims of equality, it is clear that the Dalai Lama was highly respected at the Chinese court. Throughout this period, relations between Tibet and China remained strong as the Dalai Lama acted as a liaison between the Chinese and the Mongols. However, following his death tension began to rise. Tibet's regent, Desi Sangye Gyatso, hid the Fifth Dalai Lama's death for fifteen years while the sixth was trained, but relations weaken. The Kangxi Emperor began to become confused as to why the Mongols were becoming increasingly unruly and when Desi finally revealed that the Fifth Dalai Lama had died the sixth was an awful disappointment. He drank heavily, led a promiscuous life, and eventually refused to take his monastic vows. Although the Fifth Dalai Lama united Tibet, in the years that followed Tibet was in chaos. Constantly, Tibet moved between war and peace with the Qing Chinese and the Mongols.

The ascension of the Sixith Dalai Lama became a major point of dispute between Tibetans and Mongols and the Tibetans were forced to invite the Chinese into the Eastern areas of Tibet, Kham and Amdo, in an attempt to put down the threatening Mongols. The plan worked in the short term with the Chinese expelling the Mongols, but the Qing remained and attempted to reorganize Tibet to favor the Chinese government thus triggering antagonism from Tibetans. Although some Chinese historians trace rule over Tibet back to the Mongol Empire, it is arguable that Qing China was the real instance of Chinese rule in Tibet. The Chinese installed *ambans*, officials, to reside in and exercise control over Tibet. Their influence was initially small, but overtime the Chinese placed strict sanctions on Tibet and increased the strength of the *ambans* even forcing the Dalai Lama to speak to the Chinese emperor through the *ambans.* Historians disagree about the significance of the *ambans* extent to which Qing China controlled Tibet at this time with Chinese historians claiming that Tibet was fully under Chinese rule and Tibetans claiming that the Qing *ambans* were tantamount to ambassadors and China and Tibet shared a patron-priest relationship. In the end, the truth most likely lies somewhere in between, the Qing did not have complete control, but Tibet's autonomy waned under Qing rule.

The Tibetans constantly required Chinese and Mongol military aid as the Nepalese and later the Sikhs invaded. However, this time they were still exercising their own diplomacy with foreign nations, which now included Europeans making their way to the Far East.

Beginning in the eighteenth century and moving into the nineteenth century, the British and Russians began to show interest in Tibet as part of their global diplomatic duel called "The Great Game." As Russia moved East into Central Asia the British moved north from India, Tibet found itself at the center. During this time, the British sought to make several deals with the Tibetans by sending an emissary named Colonel Younghusband to Lhasa while the Russians linked themselves to the Tibetans through their diplomatic ties to Tibetan Buddhists in Mongolia and particular the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's tutor, Agvan Dorjiev. However, the European imperialists soon ran into a snag when the Chinese began to make official claims that Tibet was under Chinese sovereignty and therefore should not be making alliances with foreign powers. This was the first instance of China making an official claim that it controlled Tibet and the matter continued to go unsolved.

Throughout Qing era, the Tibetans were at times staunchly independent and at others in desperate need of aid. This is evidenced by the Chinese attempts to interfere with the appointment of Dalai Lamas. Following a Nepalese invasion of Tibet, the Chinese tightened control on the area and instated a Golden Urn system in which a new Dalai Lama would be randomly chosen from a list of reputable candidates in a lottery with names being picking from a golden urn. The Tibetan reaction to this indicates whether or not they were in need of aid. On some occasions, the Tibetans agreed with the urn's decision and on others the Tibetans respectfully declined with the Tibetans caving to policy when they desperately needed Chinese support. However, the Qing Chinese also desperately needed Tibet because the Dalai Lama still exerted influence over dangerous nomadic tribes to the north, primarily the Mongols, and the Qing feared a repeat of the Yuan dynasty, a foreign takeover. For the time being, Tibet needed China and China needed Tibet. However, the Qing soon collapsed due to internal strife fueled by foreign pressure and Tibet received de facto independence as China was thrown into the chaos of the early twentieth century.

During this time, some Chinese historians claim that Tibet continued to be under Chinese rule, but in reality China's instability allowed Tibet to act completely autonomously. This was a major breakpoint in Sino-Tibetan relations. If Qing China was evidence that Tibet was once part of China, early Modern Tibet showed that the nation could function independent of the "motherland." Following a trip to India, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama promptly took advantage of the situation. He expelled the *ambans* and gave a speech proclaiming that the relationship between China and Tibet had always been a patron-priest one and that Tibet was a "small, religious, and independent nation." In addition, the Dalai Lama made foreign policy deals with Britain and ceded Southern Tibet to British India establishing the McMahon Line has the border between Tibet and India, a move that the Chinese vehemently argued was illegal. However, during the first half of the twentieth century, the Chinese had no ability to express their anger as they were tangled up in worldwide conflicts and civil war. Not until after four decades of turmoil in China, and independence in Tibet, were the Chinese finally able to reassert their past presence in the land of snows.

From all of this we can see quite clearly that Tibet and China have a long and sorted past and even historians are divided. On one hand, Chinese historians contend that Tibet has been part of China for centuries owing its civilization to the Chinese princess that the first Tibetan Emperor, Songsten Gampo, married nearly fifteen centuries ago. On the other hand, there are historians who argue that Tibet was never part of China. Although it may have asked for Chinese aid or participated in patron-priest relationships, Tibet was never a Chinese subject. But, after wading through all of this history and debate, we arrive at modernity, the 1950 Chinese reassertion of power in Tibet. Tensions between the two areas had grown throughout history and the Chinese had loomed its influence over Tibet in the past, but this time the outcome was different. The Chinese saw Tibet as theirs and as they began to reassert their power, there was no doubt that Tibet was now part of China even if it had never been before. In this time period, all of Sino-Tibetan coalesced with histories repeating themselves with new twists. A combination of history and twentieth century changes forged a new Sino-Tibetan relationship as the development of new governments and ideologies in China and

around the world would alter the situation between China and Tibet.

Following the Chinese Civil War, Mao's Communist party was victorious and he wasted no time in assimilating Tibet into the People's Republic of China, but the Tibetans were confused. Not only had Tibet been independent for the past forty years, but they also believed that they never belonged to China. However, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama feared that there was no other choice, Tibet was no match for the venerated People's Liberation Army and international support was sparse. World War II had ended only five years prior and no nation was willing to engage in a large scale conflict with the battle-hardened Chinese after such a disastrous war. Past allies, such as the Mongols and the Indians, were in no condition to aid the pleading Tibetans with the Mongols now consolidated under the Soviet Union and India still on shaky ground politically only recently receiving their independence from the British. The Tibetans had no choice, but to capitulate the PLA had already decimated a small contingent of Tibetan forces and full-on war would lead to a slaughter. Therefore, the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama's delegates met and created the Seventeen Point Agreement for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet. In it, the Tibetans made several concessions giving the Chinese control over foreign policy and defense in exchange for domestic autonomy and the continuation of Buddhism. Certainly, the Tibetans agreed to the treaty with sufficient coercion, but given the circumstances the measures seemed to often peaceful coexistence between China and Tibet. Having gone through all the delicate paperwork, the Tibetans agreed to allow the Chinese entrance into their country believing that Chinese rule would be like it had been in the past. The Chinese would appoint some new officials and ask for tribute, but for the most part Tibet would remain the same, domestically autonomous, and persevere as it did under Mongol or Qing rule. The Tibetans neither understood that China had adopted new policies and considered Tibet now under complete Chinese control nor did they see the wave of nationalism on which the Communist party was riding.

Nationalism was a new invention in early twentieth century China and the Tibetans were unfamiliar with its mechanics. After the Chinese made their way into Tibet, they began with helpful

practices like building roads and giving aid to the poor. But, the Chinese made no mention of communism and carefully avoided treading on Tibetan religious practices. However, from some Tibetans', such as Palden Gyatso's, perspective, the Chinese presence was palpable and growing triggering anxiety amongst the Tibetan monasteries. The Fourteenth Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama visited Mao in Beijing in 1954 to show their good faith and in fact, some Tibetans, including the the Dalai Lama, were fans of the new Chinese ideology, Marxism. But, they soon saw that the Chinese did not arrive in Tibet to spread Marxist ideas. The Chinese were confiscating holy lands, slowly dismantling the Tibetan government, publishing propaganda, and replacing Tibetan policy with Communist Chinese ideology. In 1956, the Chinese began to use more forceful measures in Kham, a region consisting of present-day Easter Tibetan and Western Sichuan, and Amdo, present-day Qinghai, and Khampa refugees soon began arriving in droves at Palden's monastery, Drepung. As stated at the beginning of this paper, the Chinese began to hold theatrical performs and film nights in Tibet showing Chinese opera's, such as *The East is Red*, which highlighted the PLA's defeat of the Guomindang and the Japanese and praise Mao as our "red sun." These pieces of propaganda were just the beginning and they sought to erase Tibetan culture and history, or for that matter any culture or history counter to the party, and install a new belief structure and the ideal Chinese population. The Thirteenth Dalai Lama had written a prophecy "beware the red ideology," but the penchant for nationalism was unlike anything the Tibetans had expected.

By 1958, violence spread into Central Tibet and frightened Tibetans felt conned by China's opening spurt of magnanimity. In 1959, the Chinese invited the Dalai Lama to Beijing and although he accepted, the Tibetan people believed that the attempt at reconciliation was a trap. Tibetans took to the streets of Lhasa, Tibet's capital and the home of the Dalai Lama, and protested Chinese occupation fearing that the Dalai Lama's visit to Beijing may end in capture or assassination. The protest grew and exploded into open armed conflict between the Tibetans and the Chinese starting the Tibetan Uprising in Lhasa. The combat lasted for two days and the Chinese eventually began to bombard the Dalai Lama's palace. As a result, he fled Tibet for India, the ancient holy land, publicly denounced

the Chinese Communist government and established a Tibetan government in exile. Just as it had done nearly a millennium early, Tibet fostered tension between China and India.

In the past, Tibet was pinned between two different Buddhist powers and was forced to decide between the two, eventually deciding to convert to Indian Buddhism. By the 1950s, Tibet again found itself between two different belief structures, but this time it was Chinese communism and Indian democracy. Although the Dalali Lama had support communism in the past, his flight to India was a clear denunciation of Chinese policy. Again Tibet chose an Indian ideology over its Chinese counterpart in an attempt to escape Chinese influence. However, China would not allow this to happen again. It tighten its iron grip on Tibet and cracked down on Tibetans it believed were enemies of the state, such as Palden Gyatso. Although the Dalai Lama had created a new government, the Chinese had no intention of recognizing it and tension brewed between China and India. China was furious with the reception that India gave their enemy as the Indian government bequeathed an old British outpost in Dharamsala to the Tibetan government in exile. The Dalai Lama's flight led to several others throughout Tibet as the Chinese attempted to imprison these political dissenters and violence erupted along the Tibetan-Indian border as the Indians pushed to help Tibetan Buddhists reach peaceful political exile. In response, the Indians outposts along the border in Southern Tibet and the Chinese claimed that the outposts were well within Chinese territory thus marking an Indian invasion, which acted as the final trigger to start the Sino-Indian War.

The origin of the border confusion stemmed from the McMahon Line, the border Britain and Tibet drew in the early twentieth century, mentioned earlier which the Chinese saw as illegal. The Chinese disputed the border because at the time they believed that Tibet was not independent, but under Chinese control and could therefore not make international policy decisions detailing national boundaries. On the other hand, the Indians believed they were entitled to the land the British signed for in the Simla Accord. As a result, the act of placing outposts within this disputed territory was not only an attempt to liberate fleeing Tibetans, but also a dismissal of the idea that Tibet was ever under Chinese authority. The confrontation lasted briefly ending within months following Chinese

withdrawal, despite Chinese military victories, but it is important for marking the extent to which China was willing to go to preserve its hold over Tibet. In this war, pieces of history from deep in the annals of Sino-Tibetan relations played out on a modern backdrop. Pre-modern history and changes from the early twentieth century combined as history repeated with new twists.

Since the war, Tibetans have continued to sue for independence through non-violent means. Following the death of Mao in 1976, Tibetans received expansions of their human rights, but Mao's successor, Deng Xiaoping, refused to grant Tibet autonomy and Deng's successors have continued with his policy. On the thirtieth anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising, many Tibetans united to leader a mass protest with the largest contingent in Lhasa. Again, the mass protest led to violence as Chinese police used violence to disperse the protesters. Soon the Chinese declared martial law in order to pacify the protest and international news organizations pushed for a look at the devastation as the Chinese expelled foreign tourists and journalists. The protests spread throughout China and acted as momentum towards the infamous student protests at Tienanmen Square. Although the Dalai Lama was not present at the rallies, he ardently supported their message. And today, Tibetan Buddhists, such as the Dalai Lama and Palden Gyatso, spread awareness of their plight throughout the world with books, films, speeches, meetings with world leaders, and lectures, in an attempt to overturn China's policy of their homeland.

In conclusion, Sino-Tibetan relations are not limited to modernity, their connections stretch back for centuries, but significant ideological changes in China and other differences throughout the diverse world triggered the birth of a new relationship. The Sino-Tibetan story begins with the marriage of a Tibetan Emperor and a Chinese Princess, but from that point onward there is little union between the two. The Tibetans made a significant effort to stay outside of the Chinese sphere of influence while also making connections with other nations throughout Asia. Under Trisong Detsan, the Tibetans converted to the Indian version of Buddhism to avoid falling under the power of Chinese monasteries while also forming a religion that would unite them with the increasingly Buddhist countries in Asia. After periods of downfall in both Tibet and China, the two were brought under the

vast umbrella of the Mongol empire. During this time, some Chinese historians argue Tibet became subservient to China, which was under Kublai Khan's control. Therefore when the Mongol rule gave way to Ming sovereignty, the Chinese contended that Tibet was not under Chinese rule, but Tibetans disagree. They formed an alliance with the remaining Mongol confederations and succeed in converting the Mongols to Tibetan Buddhism, gaining military aid, and forming the Dalai Lama lineage. Under the Fifth Dalai Lama, the Chinese and Tibetans were the closest they would come to separate nations at peace. Following his death, the Tibetans and Mongols feuded over the ascension of the next Dalai Lama and the Tibetans invited in the Qing Chinese to quash the Mongol uprising. However, at this point the Qing believed they had conquered Tibet and introduced new government officials called *ambans* and established a new method of succession for the Dalai Lamas called the Golden Urn system. Although the situation was not ideal for the Tibetans, it remained in place until the fall of the Qing at the onset of the twentieth century only then did Tibet proclaim independence under the leadership of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama and even drew national borders with the British. However, China refused to acknowledge the assertion of independence and Tibet's foreign policy though it was powerless to counter the proclamations until four decades later. And so, after years of independence the Chinese returned to claim Tibet, at which point history began to clash with a changing world. The Tibetans attempted to play powers off of one another like they had in the past to maintain independence, but their old allies, the Mongols and the Indians, were unable to provide aid and the Chinese forced the Tibetans into the Seventeen Point Agreement. Although the occupation was not immediately violent, China's emphasis on nationalism and propaganda attacked Tibetan culture while the Chinese slowly pushed to assume control of the Tibetan government. Tension exploded during the Tibetan Uprising with the Dalai Lama fleeing to India, which coupled with a border dispute triggered the Sino-Indian War, a brief clash highlighting the mixture of century old history and modern Chinese ideology in every Sino-Tibetan conflict. After, the Chinese and the Tibetans continued to disagree on the situation in Tibet with the oppressed Tibetans leading a massive protest thirty years after the Tibetan Uprising. However, the protest again turned into a riot just as it did

thirty years earlier and the police used force to crush the opposition culminating with the infamous example at Tienanmen Square. In Tibet, history runs deep and in some areas the Tibetans live the same way they did centuries ago, but it is important to recognize that this history coupled dramatic changes in the early twentieth century led to a Sino-Tibetan relationship in which the Chinese assumed complete control of the Tibetan nation, which they sought to pull into their sphere of influence for centuries, but also a relationship with which neither side content, a relationship still yearning to be resolved.

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[1] Palden, 35-37.
[2] Palden, 13.
[3] Beckwith, 17.
[4] Van Schaik, 8-10.
[5] Van Schaik, 10.
[6] Van Schaik, 33.
[7] Van Schaik, 38.
[8] Palden, 13.
[9] Van Schaik, 67.
[10] Palden, 13.
[11] Van Schaik, 46.